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Commonweal

The Popular Will

by Patrick Sanford

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olume LXX, No. 3 April 17, 1959 Twenty-Five Cents

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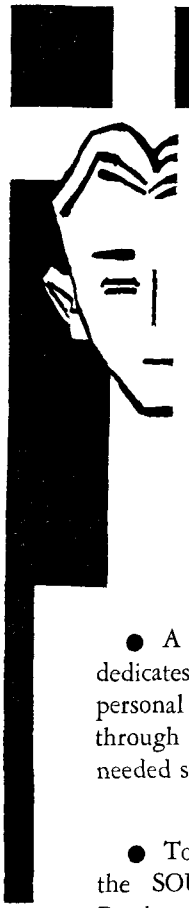

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

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Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly at 440 Post Road, Orange, Conn. by the Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685.

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U. S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

THE PRESIDENT AT GETTYSBURG

THERE MAY HAVE been little that was new about President Eisenhower's words at Gettysburg College—oldest Lutheran college in the United States—but his speech had real value, nonetheless. On the level of language it was clear, concise and to the point; on the level of ideas it was calm, reasoned and convincing.

Speaking on what was the last day of the NATO foreign ministers' meeting, Mr. Eisenhower spelled out the principles on which this nation is determined to stand. There will be no appeasement of Communism, President Eisenhower reiterated, for appeasement is more than dishonorable; it is the most dangerous course we could follow. "The world," the President said, "paid a high price for the lesson of Munich—but it learned it well."

Like many others in the government who must daily concern themselves with life-and-death decisions, the President is obviously concerned to see that the American people understand the nature and extent of the Soviet threat to the free world. Specifically, he tried to focus public attention on the mutual security program which has in recent weeks been subjected to sharp criticism inside of Congress and out.

"Why," the President posed the question, "should America, at heavy and immediate sacrifice to herself, assist many other nations, particularly the less developed ones, in achieving greater moral, economic, and military strength?" What are the facts of the present world situation that make such action imperative?

"The first and most important fact," the President said, "is the implacable and frequently expressed purpose of imperialistic Communism to promote world revolution, destroy freedom and communize the world." Toward this end the Soviet Union employs every available weapon, from propaganda, political subversion and economic penetration to the use or threat of armed force. In the face of this threat, the United States today spends about forty-seven billion dollars annually to preserve the nation's security. What the President tried to make clear at Gettysburg was that his mutual security proposals are an integral part of this program of national security.

FEW TODAY would deny the need for self-defense, but the danger is that Americans will conceive self-defense in terms too narrow, too exclusively national. "Another fact, that we ignore to our own peril," the President said, "is that if aggression or subversion against the weaker of the free nations should achieve successive victories, Communism would step by step overcome once free areas. The danger, even to the strongest, would become increasingly menacing."

In this circumstance, even national self-interest by itself dictates that every free nation resist the loss to Communism of any other nation. A slight saving in taxes could be made by closing our eyes to the Communist threat to weaker nations, but the nation would soon pay heavily for such short-sighted economy, in terms of dollars and in terms of the increased number of men we would have to keep in uniform.

Ordinary common sense therefore requires that we support the independence and economic well-being of less-favored free nations in order to keep them out of Communist hands. Implementing this policy takes different forms, of course, depending on particular circumstances. South Viet Nam, for example, is in constant danger of direct aggression; that nation therefore needs military aid as well as help in economic development. Japan, on the other hand, faces no immediate military threat, but it

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desperately needs outlets for trade with Western nations; high tariff barriers against Japan could eventually force it to look to Communist China for the commerce it needs for sheer survival.

In each case, the problem is quite different, just as the problem of Berlin is quite different from that of either Viet Nam or Japan. All three, however, do have at least two things in common: they are battlegrounds in the free world's struggle against Communism, and there is no cheap or easy way of defending them. "Mutual security and American security are synonymous," the President said. "These costs are high—but they are as nothing to those that would be imposed upon us by our own indifference and neglect or by weakness of spirit. . . . Every gain of Communism makes further defense against it harder and our security more uncertain."

In his speech at Gettysburg, then, the President outlined once more the basic United States policy of collective security against Communist encroachment. In doing so he did not try to answer all questions; most strikingly, he failed to address himself to the fears of many that the United States is not in fact doing as much as it should—fears which we share. But taken as a reply to those who would reduce our national efforts even further, the President's speech came at an ideal time. Meeting the continuing Communist challenge is expensive, but failure to do so is unthinkable.

WORLD REFUGEE YEAR

TO THE TWIN certainties of death and taxes, our century has made a grim addition: refugees. For despite the great and heroic efforts which have been made in their behalf, the world's refugees—more than two million of them—continue to bear their undeserved burdens of physical, mental and spiritual torment.

The most recent, if not the most appalling, example of this suffering can be found in the report to the U.N. by the International League for the Rights of Man on the fate of some six thousand Hungarian refugees. Most of these fled Hungary after the rebellion of 1956, found more or less dismal refuge in various refugee centers and then were lured back to Hungary by promises of amnesty. It is estimated that of the twenty-one thousand Hungarians who went home under these circumstances about six thousand have been arrested and subsequently imprisoned, executed or exiled to the Soviet Union.

Last December the United Nations General Assembly voted to proclaim a World Refugee year, to begin July 1, when all the free nations would re-examine their programs for dealing with the refugee problem. And now the United States Committee for Refugees has submitted to President Eisenhower a set of proposals for U.S. participation in this world effort. These proposals call for, among other things, Federal appropriations of at least ten million dollars beyond present expenditures for the refugee programs, and the admission to the United States of twenty thousand refugees annually beyond those authorized by present quotas.

We hope that these recommendations will be favorably considered. They would represent great strides forward in our response to this ever-urgent, ever-tragic need. Our response up to now, in proportion to our wealth and resources, not to mention the desperate need of the people involved, has not been what, in justice, it ought to be.

POSSIBLE TURNING-POINT

EIGHT YEARS AGO the present agreement whereby Mexican farm workers are imported into this country on a temporary basis went into effect. The regularization of this practice has had certain advantages; *braceros* hired under contract conditions undoubtedly fare better than the "wetbacks" who came to this country illegally and therefore had little recourse against unchecked human exploitation. Despite some improvement, however, wages, housing and sanitary conditions compatible with a bare minimum of human decency are still not provided by many employers of these imported Mexican workers. And, of late, low-paid *braceros* have begun to be shifted from regular farm work to packing and other food processing.

There could be no better time to re-examine this whole system than on the eve of the meeting of the mixed commission which is about to take up the renewal of this United States-Mexican agreement. Representatives of the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and of organized Mexican labor have already started to confer in the matter. It is their highly reasonable contention that both groups should be represented at the commission meetings, at least on a consultative basis.

The possibility that the present *bracero* agreement will simply be extended, with a few minor changes, is an alarming one. Protection of the four hundred thousand laborers recruited in Mexico and brought here annually for seasonal work is at stake,

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and their presence under the conditions now obtaining has much to do with the plight of our own domestic migratory farm workers and their families. This agreement is the single factor most responsible for conditions which Secretary of Labor Mitchell recently described as "an affront to the conscience of the American people." The investigation which he promises could have no more promising place to begin.

Only two acceptable alternatives appear open to the commission. One would involve drastic changes in the provisions of the agreement, which has but two months to run. If the rates for wages were set high enough, and decent, enforceable requirements as to housing, sanitation, transportation and immunization against communicable diseases added, Texas and California growers would be less inclined to import Mexicans in such large numbers. That would give our own underemployed migratory farm workers, who averaged less than nine hundred dollars' earnings in 1957, more of a chance. In that the Mexican workers who would be imported under the new agreement would still have some legal status, this might be the preferable choice.

More tempting in its very simplicity is the other acceptable alternative. Why not scrap the *bracero* arrangement altogether—if law enforcement can be counted on to prevent subsequent substitution of "wetbacks" for *braceros?* The nub of the controversy is the planters' and growers' contention that only by means of a pool of dependable foreign contact labor can their perishable crops be harvested on schedule as needed. They claim that they import Mexican labor not to save on labor costs but rather because of its dependability as a labor source. Perhaps docility would be a more accurate term. In any case many non-labor observers would question the need for importing foreign agricultural labor at all.

Last year when officials of the State of Washington refused the certification of a farm labor shortage, which is supposed to be a requirement for permission to import *braceros,* domestic farm labor proved wholly adequate in that highly agricultural state. No foreign farm labor was imported, and the average wage rate was $1.25 per hour. Here in the East, crews from Arkansas, members of the National Agricultural Workers Union, worked so successfully on a contract basis for Pennsylvania growers that this year similarly organized union work crews from out-of-state may be employed on farms in New York and New Jersey. It is undoubtedly true that if our two million hired farm workers (more than one-third migratory) would organize, they could demonstrate beyond argument that a dependable source of farm labor exists here as it is.

If, then, our arrangement with Mexico is not drastically revised this spring along the lines indicated or scrapped altogether, an inexcusable situation will persist. And without considerable public protest, the wishes of the California and Southwestern growers involved—and of their influential representatives in Congress—will prevail: the present arrangement with most of its abuses will continue. What can be done to arouse the national conscience and make its indignation against such assaults on human dignity felt at the impending negotiations in Mexico City?

CHINESE IMPERIALISM

THE TIBETAN revolution seems, militarily at least, a hopeless cause. Yet it may signal a tremendously important reversal in Communist China's Afro-Asian foreign policy. For while the Peiping government has been clearly an "aggressor" in the eyes of the United Nations and the West generally, the peoples of the East were, up till now, not at all convinced. The Chinese Communists had more than once resorted to military force—in Korea and North Viet Nam and Quemoy—but the situations were always obscured by the involvement of Western interests. Peiping could always claim, and did, that Eastern tensions were the result of colonialist agitation by "outsiders." Although fervently desirous of "peaceful coexistence," the Communist line went, the Peiping government was forced to take up arms to protect itself against "Western imperialism."

Such distortion is impossible in the case of Tibet. The smokescreen of Western colonialism cannot be used, this time, to cover up Communist China's brutal tactics in regard to an "autonomous" neighbor nation. And the result is that Peiping has been severely criticized throughout Asia for its violation of the 1951 treaty with Tibet, for its resort to nothing less than the imperialism it condemns in its own anti-Western propaganda. An editorial in a Jakarta newspaper, for example, described the Chinese invasion of Tibet as "Asians kicking Asians around."

This has been the reaction in Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon and, most importantly, India. Mr. Nehru has necessarily been more circumspect than ordinary Indian citizens, who have shown their shock and their resentment of China's action in Tibet by

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means of angry public demonstrations. But the Indian Prime Minister has spoken out in what were, for him, unusually bitter terms. Furthermore, public feeling in India, with the exception of members of the Indian Communist Party, seems overwhelmingly to sympathize with the Tibetans and to condemn the Chinese Communists. And this pro-Chinese stand on the part of India's Communists seems to have seriously discredited the Party in the eyes of most of their countrymen.

China's ultimate victory over the rebellious Tibetan tribesmen seems inevitable, but it may well prove an exceedingly costly victory. Communist pretensions in the East have already been badly shaken by the events of the past few weeks. The "neutralism" espoused by India's widely revered leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, has been strained more than ever before by the situation called "Asia's Hungary." It may well be that, in long-range, hemispheric terms, the price for control over Tibet will be a ruinous one for the Chinese Communists.

HIGH COST OF INSURANCE

THE BASIC PRINCIPLE of insurance is to share and spread the risk in the common interest. And it is primarily on this basis that car-owners in many states have been finding auto insurance increasingly harder going recently. Not only are rates becoming astronomical, but many companies are refusing to renew policies when due except for preferred risks or unless the car-owner takes out other kinds of insurance with the same firm. This can be serious business for the individual citizen in a state like New York, where insurance is a prerequisite for car registration and license plates.

It is not much help to ascribe the companies' increasing intransigence to excessive agents' commissions or a high margin of profit. Many other factors enter in. The number of accidents on American highways is appalling. Costs of repairing the modern car continue to spiral. Juries throughout the land tend to become ever more expansive in setting the figure an insurance company will pay to compensate for death on the highway, physical and psychological damage, medical expenses, loss of earning power and car repairs or replacement. In the whole picture there is only one bright spot: the claims the insurance companies are meeting are inevitably reflected in rates that at least constitute some check on heedless teen-age driving; the new minimum in Manhattan for a family with a licensed male driver under twenty-five, for example, is over three hundred dollars a year. But that is relatively small comfort in a situation in which the high rate of auto accidents is clearly the villain.

ONE MAN'S SIDESHOW

THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN of either political party is almost by definition, a frank and unabashed partisan, and normally we are inclined not to take his statements too seriously one way or the other. But we do think retiring G.O.P. chairman Meade Alcorn was wrong in charging that four Democratic Presidential hopefuls were turning the Senate into "a sort of sideshow."

The men singled out by Mr. Alcorn were Senators Lyndon Johnson, John F. Kennedy, Hubert H. Humphrey, and Stuart Symington. We don't doubt that any one of these men would be honored to get their party's nomination—who would not?—but criticism of their activities in the Senate, it seems to us, should be directed to their work, not to what Mr. Alcorn thinks are their motives.

Mr. Alcorn knows as well as anyone that the Senators in question can win the nomination only by *not* behaving irresponsibly in Congress. And the fact is that each of them has a better record on this score than many a legislator who is intent only on winning re-election to his present office the next time around. Indeed, there is nothing like having an eye on the Presidency to make a man rise above sectional prejudices and start thinking in terms of the welfare of the nation as a whole. We don't think the Senate is becoming any more of a sideshow than usual, and the more we see of the prospective nominees, Democratic and Republican, the better we like it.

FOOTNOTE TO THE NEWS

TURNING from a recent front-page account of the rise of anti-American feeling in Japan, we found, on page twenty-three of the same newspaper, the following two-sentence U.P.I. dispatch, almost lost among the ads: "The Kyodo News Agency reported today that nineteen-year-old Takako Tokahashi died Saturday in Hiroshima of malignant anemia diagnosed as an 'after effect' of the atomic bombing thirteen years ago. The agency said the girl's death raised the number of deaths this year from 'atomic diseases' in Hiroshima to fifteen."

End of dispatch, end of editorial.

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The Popular Will

In the assignment of blame for our current defense weaknesses, public opinion is so far the one thing that has not been officially blamed

by PATRICK SANFORD

PUBLIC OPINION in democracies is the one policy-forming agent that can afford to resent and reject criticism, either political or moral, arising from a policy failure. The people are perennial office holders, by virtue of constitutional if not divine right, and so are responsible to no one but themselves for their reputation and continued role in national affairs.

In America this public confidence is strengthened by a high degree of self-righteousness—a feeling of moral infallibility—which is understandable in view of our unparalleled political success, the glory of our arms in defense of freedom, and our near religious belief in "God's country." National failures, if they are acknowledged, are termed ridiculous or are regarded as the fault of national leaders. Public opinion will not accept blame, indeed need not, so long as it holds the elected and appointed authorities in thrall.

That is probably why in all the blame-assigning that has attended our current defense scare, little has been said about public responsibility. Public opinion is so far the one thing that has not been officially blamed for having had any part in the failure of American weapons and strategic thinking to keep abreast and ahead of recent Soviet advances. But it is certain, nonetheless, that "we the people," through apathy and overconfidence, through reluctance to meet the payments of an adequate defense program, through devotion to the folklorish assumption that America, as the special protégé of Divine Providence, could never *really* collapse about our ears—that we have contributed generously to the present defense crisis.

Of more immediate interest and importance is the possibility that an uninformed public ideology, through direct interference in concrete military doctrine, could exercise an influence ruinous to a future military program judged necessary by competent officials. There is evidence to support Walter Lippmann's judgment, in *The Public Philosophy,* that in recent history "the prevailing public opinion has been destructively wrong at the critical junctures. The people have imposed a veto upon the judgments of informed and responsible officials. They have compelled the governments, which usually knew what would have been wiser, or was necessary, or was more expedient, to be too late with too little, or too long with too much, too pacifist in peace and too bellicose in war, too neutralist or appeasing in negotiation or too intransigent."

DETERMINING at which points precisely public opinion has been wrong is, of course, largely a matter of private historical judgment. Events are not always unequivocal, even in hindsight. Certain instances, however, stand out. Ernest Lefever, in *Ethics and United States Foreign Policy,* names four occasions on which, he believes, the Administration "yielded to public passion and pursued foreign policies they opposed, and which subsequently were regarded as politically unwise and morally unjustifiable."

These occasions were: McKinley going to war with Spain in 1898; Harding holding the Washington Disarmament Conference in 1921; Secretary Kellogg in 1928 negotiating the Paris Pact to "outlaw war" and Roosevelt giving in to neutrality legislation in the 1930's. The last three policies, Mr. Lefever suggests, contributed to the inevitability and magnitude of World War II. He also cites the rapid demobilization which President Truman ordered after the close of that war, in compliance with public pressure to "bring the boys home" and against the better judgment of his advisers, as a political mistake that endangered international peace and security; it was a mistake that had to be rectified even before the Korean War.

Mr. Sanford is an American commentator, now in Europe, who specializes in military and foreign policy questions.

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In all but the first of these instances named by Mr. Lefever, the public sin was one of omission rather than commission. Popular pressure in support of "a warless world," "neutrality," "isolation," "normality" and other such slogans of the status quo induced a state of national inertia and unpreparedness in the face of dangers at least partly foreseen by the knowledgeable leaders. But, as Raymond Aron has written, "American diplomacy tends to run, as a consequence of its very failures, from one extreme to the opposite." Public sins of omission tend to bring on sins of commission, and these are, in act and consequence, the most regrettable of all. And the British diplomat Harold Nicholson said in one of his lectures that "the public is bored by foreign affairs until a crisis arises; and then it is guided by feelings rather than by thoughts."

If they are right, the paradox that the nation least warlike in its tastes and philosophy should become the leading exponent of unlimited warfare is resolved. Raymond Aron pointed out, in *The Century of Total War,* that "in war, as with fissionable materials, there is a critical mass." In the case of the American mass in both world wars two explosive elements came together almost simultaneously to detonate the public temper. The first of these was the righteousness that had hitherto held the country aloof from the gathering storms abroad, and isolated it behind a shield of pacifism—and two oceans. Once the country had been attacked, moral indignation turned pacifism to ferocity. "He who would act the angel acts the brute." The second element was the "technical breakthrough." The nation had weapons and techniques sufficient to carry the terror of our vengeance farther than ever before. Public opinion, it seems, was swept away as much by what we could do as by what we should do. Thus, total war and the tendency to universalize violence were not only expressions of our righteousness, they were also a reflex reaction to the possibilities of the new techniques.

WHAT IS significant in the memory of the two world wars is the ease with which an extremist public opinion dominated the formulation of government policy. It is true that once the leadership found the public temper irresistible it did its own share of arousing enthusiasm; when in the latter stages of both wars public enthusiasm began to wane, propaganda and ideology were used to shore up and even replace genuine feeling. But the initiative came both times, and in massive tides, from popular opinion and sentiment. Woodrow Wilson told Frank Cobb of the New York *World*: "Once lead these people into war and they'll forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance."

The consequences of the second war are even a better witness to Wilson's foresight than the consequences of the first. The indiscriminate zone bombing of noncombatants, for example, is something for which public opinion, which must share responsibility, has yet to make proper reparation ("The fact that the city was crowded with refugees at the time of the attack was coincidental and took the form of a bonus." *Communiqué, Supreme Allied H.Q.,* February, 1945, after the Dresden raid). But, just as tragic, public refusal to consider any conciliatory terms of surrender served both to prolong the struggle and to raise a specter worse than the one we were obliterating. Because this was a war of righteousness to "end all wars" it was prosecuted to its limit. Because it was prosecuted to its limit it made a future war all too possible.

There are ways of preparing for, waging and winning wars that secure a nation's objective and at the same time preserve a balance of power favorable to peace and good order. But that is an uncommon wisdom; and when statesmen who might possess it are no more than ministers of opinion polls their own recognition of the real issues is of little added use. It is on this, the politico-military plane, that popular ideology exercises its most dangerous promptings; for, while battles leave their agonies for a time, mistakes in the beginning and ending of wars have lasting consequences, many of them ironic and tragic. Isolation and unpreparedness have borne such bitter fruit in our time that we can no longer safely rely on good intentions and example as sufficient rebuke to possible aggressors, the more so now that our protective oceans can be traversed in a matter of minutes. The failure of our settlements of two world wars should warn us furthermore that naive allegiance to abstract ideals and utopian dreams cannot supplant concrete objectives as the proper concern of military actions.

Public demand for rapid and complete demobilization after the last world war; public reluctance to allow an adequate share of the economy to be used for research on new weapons; public impatience with the "holding tactics" adopted in Korea; public insistence on "more bang for a buck," thus leaving the country unprepared to answer limited aggression without placing national survival at risk—these instances stand out in the recent history of mistakes for which the public and certain officials must share the blame. The power of the masses to share the formulation of mili-

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tary policy is no less apparent in these latter days of chagrin, anxiety and desperate effort.

It is true that opinion and sentiment are beginning to get their comeuppance. At least some historians and commentators, with more freedom than officials to talk on unpopular subjects, have drawn attention to the dangers of public interference in policy formation and warned that this factor could seriously undermine the effectiveness and prudence of future military actions.

IT IS SUCH limited and ambiguous issues as the Quemoy-Matsu dispute that we shall probably have to contend with most frequently in the years immediately ahead, as we have had to deal with similar issues in Indochina, Korea, Hungary and Lebanon. In the complex operations of future diplomacy there are likely to be very few entirely irreproachable causes, and still fewer absolute solutions.

The long history of invulnerability which led a large proportion of the American people to demand absolute solutions to frustrations abroad has ended, and with it any hope of again making black and white decisions and settlements. We can no longer afford to be carried away by the "technical excess." "The American people must be made aware," wrote Henry A. Kissinger in his much-noted book, *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy,* "that with the end of our atomic monopoly all-out war has ceased to be an instrument of policy, except as a last resort, and that for most of the issues likely to be in dispute our only choice is between a strategy of limited war or inaction." Nearly all the American military chiefs and advisory committees have voiced support of the theory that limited military action, carefully calculated to be ambiguous in both design and final intention, is "the most likely form in which the Soviets will employ their military power." In a situation of nuclear parity, it is widely held, limited operations are the only ones that could conceivably serve any coherent purpose.

In these circumstances, public opinion must come to realize that the burden of decision will often have to fall exclusively on the responsible officials. There will be neither time nor reason to consult the population in the event of enemy probes into free world defenses. Not only will the rapid movement of events overtake the much slower movement of opinion, thus invalidating public decisions even before they are reached, but this opinion in the first place will have relatively none of the education, experience, access to facts, not to mention prudence, required to make such judgments.

In order to meet war situations of this kind, therefore, public opinion will have to relinquish certain of its long cherished prerogatives, especially that of determining which provocations are serious enough to warrant our intervention. It will also have to forswear all further hope of total, overwhelming victory, which, given the present balance of destructive power, is no longer a meaningful phrase or expectation.

OF COURSE, to say that these changes should take place is not to say that they will, for there are at least two major obstacles in the way of such an achievement. The first of these is the understandable fear that what begins in signing over more and more decision-making power to executives might end by seeing the renunciation of certain of our liberal institutions and the adoption of a *Führerprinzip* in their stead. Leaving things to the experts, as D. W. Brogan has said, sometimes "ends up in leaving it all to the inspiration of the Führer, who tells the experts."

While it seems unlikely at present that this would happen, nonetheless the greatest military challenge in America's history could bring unparalleled dangers to our political tradition. At the least, we should be on guard against the cynicism of a Realpolitik shorn of all concern for lasting values and ideals. At the worst, we should recognize the paradox that, placing our trust solely in techniques and experts, we could work our way into the Communist orbit by dint of our very efforts to oppose it. That public opinion should relax its control over military policy does not mean that it should relax its eternal vigilance, despite the fact that it may sometimes be hard to distinguish the two functions.

The second obstacle is the deep American devotion to abstractions and ideals. It is true that several times in our past we have gone to war for limited policy objectives (e.g., in Mexico and the "splendid little war" of 1898), but we have fought our greatest wars for "Independence," "Union," "Democracy," "Four Freedoms" or "End to War." Political idealism has, of course, been the mainspring of the West generally. G. K. Chesterton asked: "Does anybody in the world believe that a soldier says, 'My leg is nearly dropping off, but I shall go on till it drops for after all I shall enjoy the advantages of my government obtaining a warm-water port in the Gulf of Finland'?"

But much has changed since Chesterton's day. Apart from our general resolve to defend freedom, these concrete "diplomatic objects" will very likely be the sole available motives for "hanging on" in any future wars, unless the American public can raise the virtue of prudence to the same motivating stature that belonged to previous war ideals. We shall henceforth be fighting, if fighting must come, for borders, peripheral states, and treaty areas, and for no other immediate purpose but to contain a colossus. Remembering Korea, we know how hard it is to sustain determination without exhilaration, and to allow the responsible statesmen to set limits to our actions and our hopes. But we may be called upon to do a better and harder thing than we have ever done before.

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BUDGETING RESPONSIBILITY

AN EDITORIAL about federal spending and the budget, called "What Kind of Austerity," published in The Commonweal for February 20th concluded with this question: "And would not a policy that depended squarely on greater individual self-sacrifice be more deserving of a title to 'austerity' than one emphasizing budgetary caution in a threatened world?"

That seems too puzzling a question to be rhetorical. What was this policy of greater "self-sacrifice"? The startling answer gathered from the whole editorial is that it is a policy of making substantially greater federal expenditures than federal income covers. Deficit spending is envisaged for housing, classrooms and hospitals, appropriations for Latin-American neighbors and still uncommitted Afro-Asian peoples, and for our defenses. So the question, annotated from previous statements, seems to ask: Does Government spending beyond its income, or Government spending checked to the level of its income, involve more "individual self-sacrifice"?

It is disconcerting to be faced by evidence that this, indeed, is not a rhetorical question. "Austerity" and "individual self-sacrifice" require responsible persons in order to mean something. Take "housing, classrooms and hospitals." . . . If the federal government spends to provide them, the country is no more austere; and, inescapably, the individual citizen is separated from personal responsibility for them. He was an integer in an electorate of forty or fifty million which some months or years ago had to vote somebody the power to appropriate in general. He is not responsible for the set-up or the management. His own part in paying is lost in the largest financial transactions history has ever seen. Part of the money is borrowed, and there is no obligation that the citizen sacrifice himself to buy the bonds. Of the taxes themselves, an enormous amount comes from duties, fees, estates, corporate tax payments, etc: money that never does enter the moral control of the individual citizen. The impact of the remaining direct tax on individuals differs so greatly among them that no general rules of austerity or indulgence can intelligibly be applied—except this, that no citizen can decide for himself what will be his own contribution. At best, there is a one/one-hundred-seventy-millionth participation in a continental compromise about what shall be done through the very special agency of the central government.

If the central government does not spend for these items, then the citizens may have it more intimately put up to him. He can work for them through lower governmental bodies, so that his decision will be many times less atomized, and the area of austerity and accomplishment may become a more vivid and visible reality. If no government does the job, then it simply won't be done unless there is in fact "individual self-sacrifice" and effort. That is the opposite extreme from federal deficit spending.

Balancing the budget eliminates the extra indirections, abstractions and deferrals involved in federal borrowing and bonds. (I may be dead when they come due.) It limits in some degree the operations which the central government performs, throwing them back toward the citizen himself. Without recognition of difficulties such as these in defining "self-sacrifice," responsibility, and the relationship of man and the state, there is an almost boring reduction of drama in politics, and very little impediment to total state centralism. It is evasive to disregard these facts of social engineering, or to turn them upside down.

According to the Pump Priming theory, clever unbalanced spending this year should raise the Gross National Product so high next year that tax collections will roll in and painlessly bring a "budget balanced at a higher level." This fortunate event would presumably eliminate the need for any distasteful "sacrifice" at all. But the theory offends dangerously well established folk wisdom by purporting to give everybody something for nothing. And historically, many governments and whole regimes have gone broke, but has any successfully primed its own pump, and then gone along balancing its budget on that happy, higher plateau? Historical criticism is severe, and the straight Republican argument is also very hard to answer. It associates pump priming with inflation and not with increasing the National Product by raising the economic base of production and distribution. This requires capital accumulation, or savings, and creative investment.

But even if pump priming were true and technically successful, and could remove from the citizenry the burden of sacrifice, yet, in the process, it would proportionately remove personal responsibility. Surely, the difference between having the national government do something, and doing it yourself or almost any other way, seems almost too big to argue about. A 77 billion dollar budget, balanced or unbalanced, is a massive, padded barrier to individual moral responsibility and control of one's own situation. A citizen must want federal houses, federal hospitals, federal classrooms, and all the rest very much indeed to want to raise the barrier even higher and thus sacrifice deliberately to the great state still more of our diminishing personal responsibility, in order to get them.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

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The writer is by nature
the critic of respectable society

Beatniks and Tradition

by JOHN P. SISK

THE BEAT generation writers have had a very good press if one uses as a standard the extent to which public curiosity has been focused on them, but they have had an indifferent to poor press if the function of a good press is to clarify. The bulk of what has been written about them has taken their delinquent conduct and assertions of disengagement at face value, with the result that they are condemned as lacking any serious connection with American culture and as being as much outside society as they themselves contend they are.

This is a convenient position to take but not a very useful one, even if the whole truth about them were their adolescent alienation from society. Beat literature may turn out to be an ephemeral oddity that fifty years from now exists only for desperate Ph.D. candidates, or it may prove to have been the nighttown madness out of which one or two authentic writers were born, but that is another matter. In the meantime, the important and easily-overlooked fact is that it is in the American grain, and that however we react to it we are reacting to part of ourselves.

The Beat generation writers are in what may be called the subversive tradition in American literature—"subversive" because writers in this tradition so often appear as destructive forces to the middle class from which they come. To the writers of the subversive tradition organized society tends to be the Enemy. The Enemy is corrupt; hamstrung by convention; hypocritical, smug, selfish, superficial; ruled by fear, cliché and sentimentality; suspicious of the individual and creative originality; afraid to let itself go, to trust what Keats calls the holiness of the heart's affections; passionately addicted to that great American document, the dollar bill. Obviously, the Enemy does not always recognize itself in this description.

The seeds of this tradition arrived with the first settlers and quickly flowered in such people as Thomas Morton, Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson, that antinomian daughter of the inner light who today might be quite at home in a San Francisco pad. But the shape of this tradition is clearer for us if we begin with Emerson and Thoreau and the reformist turmoil of the 1840's, when, as Emerson reported to Carlyle, "Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his pocket." If the Beats are "way out" the transcendentalists were there ahead of them, less licentiously but not less flamboyantly.

Thoreau (an important figure for the Beats) is the ideal subversive. He not only writes but acts out in hyperbolic terms his criticism of the Enemy's corruption; he both states and is civil disobedience. Then there is Hawthorne, a disputed figure, admittedly, but even by D. H. Lawrence's reading a subversive in disguise; Melville, ambiguous but more certainly a subversive; Whitman, the spiritual father who all but overwhelms Allen Ginsberg, and the Twain of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the fatherhood of Kerouac's *On The Road*. The Enemy's reaction to Twain's masterpiece, long ago expressed in the *Boston Transcript*, has a familiar ring today: the Public Library committee decided to exclude the book because it was "rough, coarse and inelegant, dealing with a series of experiences not elevating . . . being more suited to the slums than to intelligent, respectable people."

BUT IT IS in our own century that the subversive tradition has proliferated. For nearly two generations now the American writer has been distinguished by his dissatisfaction with the shape and aims of society. This is apparent enough in London, Dreiser, Anderson, O'Neill, Odets, Eliot, Wolfe, Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, Nathan and Mencken, many of whom society has already admitted into the family library. The dissatisfaction—or subversiveness—is even more marked, because in contexts more immediate to us, in writers like Hemingway, Steinbeck, Miller, West, Mailer, Salinger, Wright, Algren, Vidal, Bowles and Saroyan. At present, all writers of value, says Kenneth Rexroth in an apologia for the Beat generation writers, agree on the "diagnosis of an absolute corruption." The statement is defensible only if we allow Mr. Rexroth to pick the valued writers, but at least it puts the emphasis where it belongs.

The fact is that the writer is by nature the critic of the society of "intelligent and respectable people." He

Mr. Sisk, a regular contributor, is a member of the faculty of Gonzaga University, Spokane.

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and that society are locked in a dialectic. The dialectic sometimes proceeds on moderate terms, particularly when there is no question of the writer's important position within society or when he speaks for a socially valued elite. But in America, and especially in the twentieth century, this dialectic has been carried on in hyperbolic terms: the extreme positions that society takes have been countered by the writer's extreme positions.

Thus Dreiser's remorseless realism counters the day-dream of an acquisitive paradise; Mencken's irreverent mockery counters the stultification that comes from worshipping false gods; Wolfe's restless, romantic search for the meaning of America counters the naive and dangerous clarity with which a business society tries to define America; Hemingway's tight-lipped heroics counter the attempt to end heroism by organization; Salinger's and Capote's sentimental sympathy for the misfit and the outcast counters the callousness that goes with conformity and respectability; e. e. cummings' anarchism counters the growing conviction (to reverse Emerson's phrase) of the insufficiency of the private man; and Miller's and Kerouac's irrationalism counters the positivism of a society huddled desperately around its nuclear experts.

To recognize this is not necessarily to accept as infallible the diagnosis of society's evils expressed or implied in these writers. Nor is it to demand of them, as a criterion of value, a workable social program, which, if you could find it at all, might only reflect a political, economic and social virginity. The point is that such direction and order as society has depends upon all the dialectic tensions within it, and so far as this argument between the writer and society is concerned the important thing is neither position taken separately but the two together. Each is with respect to the other a control (though by no means a Hegelian guarantee) against potentially destructive excesses.

Thus, for instance, the corruption of society drove Twain to attack it, but his awareness of society's opposition (which was also a demand) freed him from the fear of a nihilistic strain in his own personality which could have been destructive to his artistic effort. One can even say (*contra* Van Wyck Brooks) that the pressure of society forced Twain to measure it by its own professed Christian standards more severely than he would otherwise have been inclined to, which was exactly what his book and society needed. Completely liberated from the tension of this conflict between Twain and society, *Huck Finn* would have little value, morally, socially or artistically.

The trouble is that in proportion as the terms of this dialectic have become extreme, the word "society" in literary circles has come to mean that part of society that is insensitive or hostile to the values of the writer; and the writer, taking his synecdoche literally, has often imagined himself as a thorough-going outsider. This throws an emphasis on the heroic adventure of writing and makes it possible for beginners and second-stringers, who do not pay enough attention to their proper business, to do a good deal of swaggering and posing as they equate literature with opposition to orthodoxy. It also makes it possible to forget the point Twain's great story dramatizes: that the important moral and social function of writers in the subversive tradition has been to counter the corruption of the whole of which they are articulate parts. That, like Twain and Fitzgerald, they have so often found the corruption to be within themselves only gives their statement of it authenticity and drama.

ALL OF THIS is true of the Beat generation writers. No matter how completely they try to cut themselves off, they remain a critically engaged part of society, though the directness and value of their engagement may be less than that of many of their subversive predecessors. One cannot read Holmes, Kerouac, Corso, Ferlinghetti or Ginsberg without realizing that their interest, even to themselves, is always in relation to the society that contains them. They depend upon the city, the physical symbol of society, to exacerbate in them the pearl of beatness.

The inarticulate hipster who feels that a violent attachment to the values of society is square dramatizes by the attitudes he assumes a rebuke of society. But the articulate hipster with his fundamental assumption of society's corruption is even more plainly engaged. Even stylistically he depends upon the literature of the square world, the rhythms and patterns of which he cannot get out of his head. Kerouac's spontaneous prose depends for its effect upon traditional prose, just as Wordsworth's "language really used by men" depended for its effect upon the poetic diction he was trying hard not to write. To recognize this is not necessarily to invalidate Kerouac's prose or Wordsworth's verse, but simply to recognize that in matters of style, as in all other matters, no man is an island.

The Beat writers have an at least functional awareness that they are a part of society that is countered and to an extent controlled by another part. Like Twain they have a kind of subconscious expectation that the rest of society will ultimately keep them from

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destructive excess, even though they may as individuals destroy themselves. On the other hand, society has a similar expectation: that critics of this sort—ideally, granted, more responsible critics than these—will protect it from its excesses. For all the indignation the Beat writers have aroused, I think it must be admitted that the general reading public is remarkably permissive towards them, as it has learned to be towards all writers in the subversive tradition—as if it is a part of a developing national awareness of that tradition's function as the hyper-sensitive, if often quite fantastic, conscience of America. This is indicated in the number of twentieth century writers now generally accepted as part of the mainstream of American literature, who when they first appeared seemed shockingly outside it.

IN A PLURALIST society such as ours there are, of course, all sorts of tensions: regional, racial, economic, political and religious. The potential for turmoil is tremendous. What stands against it is whatever we hold in common as Americans, and much of this we are not aware of, since it is expressed in patterns of conduct that have become habitual. We are very little aware, for instance, of the extent to which we have protected ourselves by a general, if mainly implicit, agreement not to court turmoil by divisive action. The result is that the very considerable degree of harmony we live in has at its base a dangerously negative and apprehensive element, and that a great deal of the dialectical interchange that is necessary for the health of society is suppressed.

This fear of dissension helps to explain the dearth of popular satire (why, for instance, T.V. loads up on horse opera and retires Sid Caesar to the guest-star pool), but it also helps to explain the extreme attitudes of subversive writers like the Beatniks, who are in a sense forced to bear more than their fair share of the dialectic burden. Society, possibly because of its uneasy conscience, fails to engage itself effectively with such opposition; perhaps it is best to say that it dares not for fear of coming face to face with its deviation from the American Dream.

It would follow, I think, that until society releases its normal interplay of criticism the subversive tradition in literature will continue to take up (will be even forced by society to take up) the extreme positions of such works as Miller's *The Air Conditioned Nightmare,* West's *Miss Lonelyhearts,* Algren's *A Walk on the Wild Side* or Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye.* The solution for society is not to take subversive writers to its bosom, hoping that they will settle down to contented sequels of *Executive Suite.* The solution is to engage seriously with them in the act of criticism.

Such an engagement would assume that the Beat writers merit no preferred treatment simply because of their tradition-sanctioned subversiveness; and it would assume that they must prove themselves as writers and not expect to get by on novelty, shock-effect or sublime intentions. As a matter of fact, Beat writing suffers as literature because of its unhappy conviction that it is impossible to "make," in the traditional artist's sense, without corrupting. Hence the Beat writers' violent and surrealist dislike of the New Critics and the university poets. The poet is defined as prophet or visionary; he is a seer more than a maker; the sign of his authentic vision is the quality of unchecked outpour, of rhapsodic, jazz-inspired improvisation in his utterance. He is the poet as inspired madman. Hence the importance of Kerouac's hero, Dean Moriarty, whose chaotic, rhapsodic life is itself a Beat poem.

THE APPEAL of the Beat writers is, however, bound up with their visionary, rhapsodic concept of the poet. In their enthusiastic acceptance of the visionary and spiritual element in life, in their indiscriminate assertion that all is holy—that we are all, as Kerouac says, angels even if we do not know it, in their passionate concern with the individual and their rejection of all that inhibits his free development, in their unqualified commitment to experience, they underline traditionally sacred American patterns of thought and action.

But at the same time, by isolating and dramatizing to the hilt these patterns, they can force us to reexamine some familiar subversive themes at a moment in our history when we most need to. We are at a point when we can least afford to be uncertain about the role of intellect, about the right relation of the individual to society, about the nature of man, about the extent of our involvement with all men everywhere. Ginsberg's "Howl" is a very American poem and Kerouac's *On the Road* is a very American novel. By this I do not mean that they are for that reason either good or bad as literature, but simply that they give us back as in a distorting mirror the anarchism and antinomianism, the dream of utopian freedom and innocence to be found in a commitment to instinct and feeling, that have always been elements in American culture; and which, if they are not consciously confronted and controlled, will, as they have often in the past, muddle our efforts to live effectively as a society in a complex world.

Dean Moriarty may strike one as the silliest holy fool in all literature. Nevertheless, he is a recognizable caricature of an image in the American heart as he rushes madly about the country, shirking all social obligations, trying passionately to dig everyone and everything, convinced that if he goes fast enough and has enough violent experiences the great ultimate secret will be laid bare to him. Kerouac's subversive service is to hold up that image while we measure ourselves against it.

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A DUBIOUS DICTUM

ON MARCH 30 the Supreme Court handed down its "double jeopardy" decision in the *Bartkus* case. The decision was a significant one, involving a number of legal technicalities. In this column I am not concerned with the case itself.

What does interest me is a dictum found in the majority opinion written by Justice Frankfurter. The dictum was chosen by the New York *Times* on March 31 as its "Quotation of the Day." This is it: "The Anglo-American system of law is based not upon transcendental revelation but upon the conscience of society ascertained as best it may be by a tribunal disciplined for the task and environed by the best safeguards for disinterestedness and detachment."

What does all that mean? I tried to translate it and it came out like this: "The Anglo-American system of law is not based on any notions of a stable moral order or reasoned system of rights and duties. Rather, the law is based on society's current beliefs about what is wrong and right. These beliefs can be reasonably well ascertained by this tribunal, for the American Constitution is such that the Supreme Court is independent of external pressures and its members are immune to improper influences or desire for personal gain."

That of course is almost as big a mouthful as Justice Frankfurter's original dictum. So I made another attempt, this time trying for the monosyllable. "This is the way to look at law. You don't say a man should do this or that because every man should do this or that just because he is a man. No, you say that a man should do this or that because just about everybody thinks he should. It is not our business as judges to ask why everybody thinks he should. It is not even our business to question whether everybody may not be on the wrong track. Our business is to make sure that when we say something is right or wrong, everybody, or just about everybody, agrees."

I hope I have misunderstood Justice Frankfurter, for if his theory of American law is what I think it is, we are all at the mercy of society's conscience. That is certainly a weak reed to cling to in a storm. The public conscience, as we know from experience, experience with Nazism especially, can be miserably corrupted. I should not like to believe that my rights depended on its vagaries. I should like to feel secure in the knowledge that the liberty we enjoy is liberty under law, a law based on some abiding notion of man's dignity. I should not like to believe that the Supreme Court has been reduced to the role of a Gallup-poll taker whose main duty is to ascertain the temperature of society's conscience.

Mr. Frankfurter may have indulged a taste for sarcasm with his reference to "transcendental revelation." If, by using the phrase, he intended to denigrate the philosophy of law as it has been traditionally understood in the West, I think he left us a poor substitute in the "conscience of society." I had understood that it was law which formed the conscience of the community, rather than the other way around. Anglo-Saxon law may indeed represent the accumulated wisdom of civilized Western man, and it may have a fine sense of the relativities of history, but to say that is quite different from suggesting the law represents nothing more august, nothing more transcendent, than the shifting values of a community.

The transcendental aspect—the idea that the individual has rights which can neither be conferred nor withheld by society—is at the heart of the matter. That it acknowledges a dimension of life not subject to governmental authority or dependent on the largesse of society has been the special glory of Anglo-Saxon law. A "transcendental revelation" has been specifically recognized and conscientiously observed.

Most of us have felt secure in the knowledge that our rights and liberties as Americans were not subject to popular whim, fancy or prejudice but to certain truths about man and society. It seems impious for even a Supreme Court Justice to dismiss this body of doctrine cavalierly as "transcendental revelation." It is too venerable, too sacred a heritage to deserve any American's scorn. Moreover it has been too useful, too productive of freedom's blessings to warrant the contempt of even the most hardboiled pragmatist.

Father John Courtney Murray recently summed up the case for civility this way: ". . . a tradition of rational belief . . . sustains the structure of the City and furnishes the substance of civil life. . . . Three truths are immediate: (1) the limitation of government by law—by a higher law not of government's making, whereby an order of inviolable rights is constituted (2) the principle of consent; and (3) the right of resistance to unjust rule. . . . One truth is remote and metapolitical—that man is not the creature of the City but of God; that the dignity of man is equal in all men; that there are human purposes which transcend the order of politics; that the ultimate function of the political order is to support man in the pursuit of these purposes."

"Transcendental revelation," indeed. This body of doctrine sums up the juridical heritage of the West. To it, in large measure, we owe our freedom. It will take more than a careless dictum to reduce its grandeur.

JOHN COGLEY.

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Lessons to be drawn
from Great Britain's experience

An End to Unemployment

by MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

THE AMERICAN economy seems largely to be working itself out of last year's recession—with the large and significant exception of unemployment figures. Despite the wide economic resurgence, more than four million Americans remain out of work, with job prospects not very bright. In Britain, too, unemployment continues to challenge the economists, but in the Welfare State of Great Britain this problem takes on quite a different aspect.

In 1958, British unemployment rose to what for a Welfare State were pretty bad figures: two to two and a half per cent of the whole work force, up to four per cent in some major regions and ten per cent or more in local pockets. I am one of a number of labor economists who, faced with this, have turned reluctantly away from the green pastures of ergonomics, group dynamics and wage differentials and come right back to earth. And, having done so, I find myself hit between the eyes by a fact I should have noticed long ago. We can now not merely reduce unemployment to some such low level as one or two per cent: we can abolish it altogether.

For consider who the unemployed are. Of half a million unemployed in Britain, about half are in that state through a deliberate decision of government policy. The Prime Minister observed recently that you cannot run an economy all the time with your foot on the accelerator. Sometimes you must use the brake. So since 1956 the brake has been used, and a quarter of a million British workers have been thrown off their jobs. The remaining quarter of a million unemployed are divided between those caught in districts where industries have collapsed, as in West Wales where the old hand tinplate mills have lately been superseded by strip mills, and those who for any of a dozen reasons are changing jobs.

We know how to deal with pockets of local unemployment. At the end of World War II certain industrially declining areas, now known as Development Areas, had a deficit of 600,000 jobs. Half of these missing jobs were found through the general expansion of industry under full employment. The other half were found by deliberately bringing into these areas, through government action stimulated by local development councils, new plants to employ about 300,000. This was done between 1945 and 1949. It was one of the greatest successes of Welfare State policy, and the machinery by which it was done is still there; it has only to be used more vigorously. True, there are no longer as many firms as in 1945 desperate for premises and labor and willing to go anywhere to get them. But new plants can still be guided, and a good many established firms are now on the move out of their congested urban locations, above all out of London.

As Peter Self has pointed out in *Cities in Flood,* there can be an awkward problem here. Location policy has two aims, not one; it has to relieve congestion as well as unemployment. When unemployment happens to be localized in a congested urban area, as in the West of Scotland now, the right policy is probably to move the workers as well as the work; to bring in new industries, but to use them, and the overspill of people from the congested districts, to revive declining country towns or balance the industry and social structure of newly developing coalfields. Of course, this kind of policy is not popular: we have some experience of it in Wales. But that is another story. At any rate, we can deal easily enough with localized unemployment in itself.

UNEMPLOYMENT due to job changing is mostly very short, not more than two or three weeks, if as much. It has never existed on any serious scale for white-collar workers, because they usually have a long enough period of notice to let them find another job before their last one runs out. My eldest daughter, for instance, is a typist. After twelve weeks with a firm she has acquired staff status and the right to a full month's notice. That does not mean she will never be dismissed; but it does make it unlikely that she will ever figure as a statistic in the out-of-work column of the Ministry of Labor *Gazette.* But a skilled craftsman, let alone a laborer, might have had to work ten or twelve years to get that status. In many firms he would never get it at all, nor be protected by effective senior-

Mr. Fogarty, long associated with the Catholic Social Guild, is The Commonweal's correspondent in Great Britain.

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ity rights. When his job runs out he, unlike the typist, will have to register as unemployed.

This difference between staff and workers is one of the highest and strongest class barriers still left in Britain. But it is crumbling. More and more firms are offering at least their senior operatives monthly or longer contracts, and we have some striking experiments with annual guarantees. Thomas Hedley, Ltd., who make soap, guarantee every employee of two years' seniority forty-eight weeks' work a year till retirement. And once the staff barrier goes completely, and every employee gets a month's notice or better, unemployment during job-changing will be a thing of the past.

The toughest problem, I admit, is that of unemployment due to general government policy. But I would say two things about this. First, we are coming in sight of policies that will let us run the economy—not indeed on a perfect level, because for efficiency and smooth running there must be some margin—fast and steadily enough to avoid peaks of unemployment such as we have seen last fall. In the last few years a vast amount of European experience and American research and theorizing has gone into working out how to keep the use of the accelerator and the brake within limits that entail neither unemployment on the one hand nor inflation and balance of payments difficulties on the other. We want to be able to run the economy within the limits set by a forty- or forty-four-hour standard week at one end and the use at the other of a moderate amount of overtime to meet emergencies. I stress "moderate" and "emergencies," for systematic overtime has been a plague of the British economy for years. The standard working week in British industry is forty-four or forty-five hours; actual average working hours are regularly, for men, forty-seven to forty-nine. We do not know the answers yet, but we have a great deal of material towards them. In ten or fifteen years, with reasonable luck, we should have worked them out.

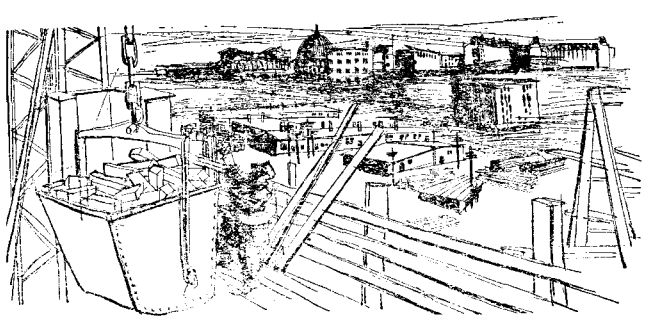
In the meantime, secondly, till the problem of the accelerator and the brake is settled, we can at least save the one or two percent of our work force affected in a bad year like 1958 from standing in line at the employment centers. Putting on the brake is a temporary operation. Proper seniority and recall rules would help to tide it over, and so would a decision to apply the Dutch system of unemployment insurance. If a man is temporarily laid off in the Army or Navy, he goes into a pool to await a new posting. That is also the right way to do it in industry, and the way the Dutch have done it.

Under their insurance scheme the first six months of a man's unemployment are carried by a joint management-union council for his own industry, and carried what is more at a rate that lets him keep up, as is his right, his ordinary standard of living; up to eighty per cent of his ordinary wage, as compared with the thirty- to thirty-five per cent of average earnings that an unemployed worker gets in Britain. There is a great deal to be said for emphasizing to the man for whom there is temporarily no work that he is not cast off; he still belongs. Big firms can take care of their own unemployed with supplementary unemployment benefits; we have some schemes in Britain that go well beyond the more publicized American ones. But a a small firm cannot afford its own S.U.B., whereas even the smallest firm can afford to pay a certain percentage of its wage bill to an industry-wide fund of the kind they have in Holland. Measures like these will also help to deal with temporary crises such as the slump in textile exports in 1952, or even the more prolonged case where an industry is going down and its workers need time to move out.

THE ESSENTIAL background to all these proposals is of course what the British White Paper on Employment Policy called in 1944 the "maintenance of a high and stable level of employment." I take it for granted that a Welfare State that means business can and will wipe out gross unemployment, leaving only the marginal one to four per cent that I have talked of here. But I hope that no one will underestimate the importance of this small marginal percentage.

In spite of the years of so-called full employment, a deep fear of unemployment, politely re-baptized redundancy, remains in British industry today. Managers will tell you that this is a hangover from the days of mass unemployment twenty years ago. It is not. It reflects the fact that for the man who works in a West Wales tin-mill or on airplane engines for Rolls Royce, a government credit squeeze, or the closure of a works, or even an ordinary job change, may tomorrow mean being thrust out of industry to live on a fraction of his normal income, and to seek in a desperate hurry a job that may or may not suit him, and that he is in any case not certain to get.

The Bishops of England and Wales recently condemned in no uncertain terms this vestige of class distinction and insult to human dignity which we call unemployment. It remains only for us to abolish it.



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THE STAGE

THE WEATHERS OF THE HEART

THERE ARE, in all art, and notably the theater art, instances of a power which derives from mind, from large intimations and magnitudes of conception—and to such ambitions "A Raisin in the Sun" could hardly be said to aspire. Again, there are writers who dominate by a certain elusive fragrance of spirit: a luxury or austerity—what you will—in the writing; a recurrence of motifs; in any event, that personal definition we call style—and Miss Lorraine Hansberry, for all her readiness of ear, pungent language and scenic imagination, seems yet not uniquely to command her own. Finally, there are works which break the mold of received experience, make voyages into—and ultimately conquests of—a new order of form or human value: and no one will claim this of "A Raisin in the Sun," with its secure domestic realism, its tangibility, its anchor in traditional motive and psychology.

Since none of these may be said to account for what "A Raisin in the Sun" undeniably possesses—dramatic contagion and a profound emotional immediacy—one must conclude that Miss Hansberry's authority rests on her infallible reading of the weathers of the heart. I am aware that the effect of such a statement is perhaps to diffuse the issue, to suggest a factitious poetic coloring of the imprecision of one's personal response, yet the impulse is supported by "A Raisin in the Sun." For it introduces as many questions of nature, I should say, as of art. I do not mean, of course, to diminish the amount of craft, indeed guile, with which Miss Hansberry has gotten a passionate living matter into form (for this is no raw *tranche de vie,* quivering and meaty on the slab); nor to deny the equity and complex shades of her judgment, and such a brilliant control of variations in the rhythm. I mean only that the source of our response to "A Raisin in the Sun" must be ultimately the response to being and to value: to a spirit generous yet vehement, tough-minded but without rancor; to a temperament able to contemplate experience with that uniquely unsexed, not sexless imagination of the very few. Miss Hansberry is all of these things, as is her play, and both are objects of virtue, to be esteemed for their oneness with nature, for their unity and rightness of being, and their lack of any need for a prosaic or egotistic "explanation." Indeed, only a moral idiot would require the latter.

Whatever the universality of its comment on human desperation and hope, "A Raisin in the Sun" has yet, of course, as its particular substance, an image of Negro life, and Miss Hansberry's singularity here lies not only in the matter of her poised self-acceptance. Rather, she has seen the Negro in the crucible of lower-middle-class American pressures, apart from that romantic and often patronizing *ambiance* of his racial exoticism, that vein, as Mr. Stark Young has it, of "his primitive color and impulses, his sexual powers, his alluring animality"—the mother in "A Raisin in the Sun," for example, "never met no African before." So it is that we are released into a milieu tense, it is true, with the permanent crises of existence, but not hysterical—a world in which the race situation is a tragic motif like any other, not didactic—and in which, again to draw on Mr. Young, one sees so much more of the Negro "fancy, humor and patience, their devotion, easy temper and rich sensuous gifts, their easy and imaginative love of life and their simple natural goodness." Their mind, too, one might add, and their burgeoning possibility. It would be insulting to congratulate Miss Hansberry on the wholeness and new density of her image of Negro life, but she could not take exception to praise for the power with which she has gotten it into dramatic and moral expression.

The translation of all this into theater has fallen to a cast so consummate, so fluent and various within patterns of emotional urgency, that one draws from description in a hesitancy of wonder and delight. To Miss Ruby Dee's shadowed vigilance, taut and curiously suffusing, and Miss Diana Sands' adolescent bravura; to Mr. Sidney Poitier's flying grace and the wildness of anguish he must embody; to Miss Claudia McNeil's superb authority and timing, no tribute could be adequate. (To this last figure, Miss Hansberry has perhaps allowed a certain haze of sentiment: one might remember how much wilfulness, distrust and egotism may lie behind these morally convinced natures.) Negro players, to be sure, by their racial vividness and sheer unfamiliarity to our senses, have often an advantage of immediate impact, yet I must say—though I have seen productions and performances which encompassed a living matter more passionate, inclusive, demanding and delicate—I must say on reflection that I have never seen, *en masse,* a better-acted play than "A Raisin in the Sun."

The esthetic consequence of Miss Lorraine Hansberry's remarkable new talent is to remind us again of the potency of emotion in the theater art. Indeed, there were moments at "A Raisin in the Sun" when, broken to tears by its intimate pain, I wondered—as did Mr. Alfred Kazin of Dreiser—whether it was not "all too much like 'reality' to be 'art.'" Yet it is only the poetry of human concern to which we respond; the play addresses itself ultimately to nothing more than the hope that we should have life more abundantly. It stands, then, as a lesson in that reconstitution of feeling which must become for our society an urgency of spirit. And though I have not thought the impression through, I might add—on the formal

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side—that the application of such pressure to the stuffs of experience and art may be the solvent to release our theater from the impasse of "realism" in which it has lately seemed to languish. (*At the Ethel Barrymore.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

HEAVEN'S MY DESTINATION

IT IS STRANGE how few films there are of any real religious depth. Hollywood tries from time to time, but it usually winds up with pictures about jeep-driving nuns or baseball-playing priests that have sentiment and a certain surface charm but not much else. European film-makers do better; and the latest addition to their roster of good religious pictures is the Austrian "Embezzled Heaven."

Effectively directed by Ernst Marischka, who also wrote the script from Franz Werfel's novel, "Embezzled Heaven" starts in Rome with the funeral services for Teta Linek. Then in a long flashback a novelist at the funeral tells the story of Teta and how she schemed to buy her way in Heaven. Teta was a cook on an Austrian estate belonging to some friends of the novelists—a nice family with two children and a happy home. These people never interfered with their cook's plan to pay for her nephew's education and preparation for the priesthood, although they were suspicious of the nephew whom Teta never saw through the years but heard from often in letters asking for more money; and besides, they had problems of their own. This part of the movie gets a little more involved than is necessary and is handled in a rather heavy Germanic manner, but throughout the film the stunning color photography and the good acting hold our interest. Annie Rosar is superb as Teta, the determined woman who keeps sending her savings to the young man for whom she has no affection at all because she is certain that when he becomes a priest, her seat in Heaven will be assured.

The film takes on a new interest when Teta sends the nephew a large sum of money and then leaves to live with him in the parish house where he reports he is now serving as a priest. Of course the young man turns out to be a swindler. Teta finally tracks him down in Prague, and is disgusted with him—as well as with herself. The heartbreaking story reaches a fitting climax when Teta, unable to go to confession or pray, makes a pilgrimage to Rome; and the film bursts forth in all its glory when it takes the simple and repentant woman on a tour of the grandeurs of the Eternal City. She meets a likable young priest (Hans Holt) on the pilgrimage; and he not only befriends her but also helps her by pointing out her lack of real love for the boy and her wrong in hoping to buy her way into Heaven through him.

The last part of the film is done with magnificence and splendor, and the scenes in St. Peter's and the Vatican are brilliantly photographed and edited. The effect is as moving to the audience as it is to the very devout and humble Teta. Catholics and non-Catholics alike will no doubt be stirred by these final sequences which are strong in their sincerity and faith. Seldom does a movie catch the depth of religious fervor with the warmth of "Embezzled Heaven."

ALTHOUGH by no means a religious film, "Imitation of Life" has the slick and problem-laden properties that pass so often as a religious-minded soap opera. Those who remember Fannie Hurst's novel or the first film version made with Claudette Colbert won't mind the changes made in this up-dated script by Eleanore Griffin and Allan Scott. The picture is now all glamor and tears—and the troubles that beset two mothers. Lana Turner, beautiful in the elaborate gowns provided for her, has to fret over what's happened to her daughter (Sandra Dee) while Lana was busy making a name for herself as an actress; and Juanita Moore, in an excellent performance as Lana's faithful Negro friend, has to wring her hands and shed tears over her wayward daughter (Susan Kohner) who wants to pass as white.

If one is tolerant toward this seemingly endless plotful of woes, one could very well find "Imitation of Life" quite entertaining. Ross Hunter has given his picture a handsome production, and Director Douglas Sirk has guided his good-looking cast (which also includes John Gavin, Robert Alda, Dan O'Herlihy and many others through the years) in performances that fit the many trying situations. Needless to say, "Imitation of Life" is a tear-jerker; and when Mahalia Jackson sings "Trouble of the World" in the finale episode, a veritable flood sweeps through the theater. Come prepared.

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THE SPIRIT of Rima survives, I guess, but not as displayed in "Green Mansions," the movie version of W. H. Hudson's famous novel about an innocent girl of the forests and the effect of corruption and evil on nature's beauty. Hudson's book, which first appeared in 1904, has intrigued Hollywood for more than twenty-five years; now that the film is on view, it is clear that Hudson's beautifully-written story has so far proved too much for the film makers.

They have tried to capture its lyrical quality and nature themes. The picture has stunning shots of the lush green country (much of it was photographed in Metrocolor and CinemaScope in British Guiana, Venezuela and Colombia). It has an interesting musical score, part by Bronislau Kaper and part by Heitor Villa-Lobos. And it has a good cast. But unfortunately the script written by Dorothy Kingsley stems only vaguely from Hudson and leaves much to be desired. And Edmund Grainger, who gave the film its handsome production, was never certain if he was making a Tarzan-type adventure movie or a poetic nature epic.

Further, Director Mel Ferrer never seems in complete command of his cast who act as if they were left to their own devices and were in need of a coordinator. Audrey Hepburn looks lovely as Rima, but you never once believe she is whistling the pretty bird calls you hear or that she is at home with all this flora and fauna. Nor is Anthony Perkins, as the young man from Caracas, sure what he's doing here—talking out of the side of his mouth like a deputy in an American western, singing like a glamor boy the film's "Song of Green Mansions," or mooning over Rima like a youth from Tarkington. The more sinister symbols, played by Sessue Hayakawa, Henry Silva and Lee J. Cobb, sulk and slither to suit their own fancies. "Green Mansions" is obviously an expensive movie and one that may well appeal to young moviegoers who won't fuss over its inconsistencies. Mature and reading audiences may prefer to visualize *Green Mansions* for themselves.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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A Clown Through and Through

HENDERSON THE RAIN KING. By Saul Bellow. Viking. $4.50.

By THOMAS F. CURLEY

ONE SURE mark of a genuine artist is his unwillingness to repeat what he has already done well. Those who know Mr. Bellow's previous work will remark the absence in *Henderson the Rain King* of two of his strongest points. Few novelists can create the atmosphere of a big American city as well as he, and yet in this book he has forsaken New York and Chicago, the locales of his other works, for an exotic Africa of the imagination where the ultimates of dreams are real. The second departure is in the identity of the main character. Bellow makes Henderson a Gentile, thus depriving himself of the explicit use of Jewish background and sensibility from which his previous major works, with the possible exception of *Dangling Man,* have taken vigor and savor. I mention these absences because despite them Bellow has freshly developed a theme that has always been at the center of his work.

In both *The Victim* and *Seize the Day,* he created "anti-heroes" of suffering. Asa Leventhal and Tommy Wilhelm exist in order to suffer. One might say without excessive distortion that these two books are studies in the pathos of suffering. It is quite another matter with *The Adventures of Augie March,* to which *Henderson* may most profitably be compared. In both of these works Bellow tried to achieve not a pathos but a comedy of suffering. I think he failed in *Augie March* and that he has succeeded with *Henderson.*

Something happens to Bellow when he uses first person narration, as he does in *Augie March* and *Henderson.* He starts at the top of his voice, and never comes down. Now this vociferousness impaired Augie's effectiveness, but it seems just right for Henderson. I think the reason lies in Augie's ordinariness. He talks very well and tells a good story, but when he complains of his sorrows one is tempted to exclaim, "You got troubles? Now listen to mine."

The difference is that Augie is merely *something* of a clown; but Henderson is a clown through and through. The mask is the man. When Henderson, stating Bellow's theme early in the book, says, "It's too bad, but suffering is about the only reliable burster of the spirit's sleep," one is not inclined to ask for evidence. Henderson himself is the evidence. Extreme and eccentric, Henderson is larger than life and therefore exempt from the claims of the ordinary. He suffers deeply, but is he starving? Not at all, he's rich and well padded. Is he ill? He's strong as an ox. Lovesick? Not on your life. Is he the victim of injustice? He's among the free and inviolate. What's the matter with him, then? He suffers from an insistent voice within that says over and over, day in and day out, "I want, I want." Henderson goes to Africa in an attempt to find out just what it is he wants. Richard Cory shot himself; Henderson goes to Africa. Both of them succeeded in getting out of this world.

Once out of nature, or back to it, Bellow's comedy rides quite free of the factual world. Questions of credibility are beside the point. Henderson rants and raves, kills frogs, becomes a Rain King and roars like a lion to his heart's discontent. The book is not remarkable for funny lines or even scenes; rather the entire conception is hilarious.

What have we? A poor big rich American with a little voice—*"Grun tu molani,"* man want to live. That's Henderson. As his wisest mentor, King Dahfu, tells him, Henderson is the Salvation type (readers of Scripture will recall that the prophet Daniel was a "man of desires"). That is not enough. Henderson, therefore, must take a course with Dahfu on the virtues of being leonine. So he descends with the King to the lion's den and, as instructed, gets down on all fours and tries to master roaring. At this point, roaring just about mastered me, but Bellow never lets up. Henderson plays it seriously all the way. Even when King Dahfu, the promoter of leoninity, is finally killed by a lion, an untamed one, to be sure, Henderson does not give the reader a wink. He goes into a magnificent rage and makes his escape from the Wariri tribe (they want him to succeed the defunct Dahfu) with a lion cub as a souvenir.

The last scene of the book is in Newfoundland. Henderson has returned to colder climes, his spirit having at last burst forth from sleep. And what is he doing? He's running around an airplane with a little boy, of American parents but who speaks only Persian, in his arms. Saul Bellow might well have stolen that phrase of Wallace Stevens and sub-titled his book *The Pleasures of Merely Circulating.*

Love, Loss and Discovery

A PRISON, A PARADISE. By Loran Hurnscot. Viking. $3.95.

By MARIAN SELDIN

THIS DIARY is an account of two loves: the first is that of a young wife for another woman's husband; the second is that of the same wife, after losing both husband and lover, for God.

The first, told under the title "The Birdcage," is in literary terms the better of the two. A girl of the twenties, Bohemian, "emancipated," deliberately and yet somehow inevitably, from the stays of tradition, belief and family, enters a disastrous marriage and seeks escape from it in an equally disastrous adultery. The events provide a natural beginning, middle, and end and involve characters who might belong in fiction, so well do they

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carry the story's logic. Hubert, the husband, taunts his young wife into taking a lover, but in his bitter jealousy does his best to destroy her when she does. The lover is just that—a lover, a man whom no one woman could satisfy, who is as unable to forego Loran as he is to love her. The girl herself, blown like Francesca by the winds of passion, desires what tortures her, a love which at its best makes her happy for "today," or "two exquisite days" or, during one period, for five; at its worst it drives her to an abortion and attempted suicide. The style, too, is so apt one finds it difficult to realize it *is* a diary.

The second section is, however, much more the reason why Miss Hurnscot—which is rather necessarily a pseudonym—has published her journals. "The Tilted Spiral," as she calls it, borrowing an image from St. Dionysius the Areopagite, recounts her difficult, her unexpected movement from the bleakest of skepticisms to God. Her very lack of faith forces her to cling desperately to ambiguous experience—a medium who brings a message from her dead husband, the infinite she senses when under anesthetic, the end of a dream in which she "sees" a field she does not know miles from the bed in which she lies.

Those with the habit of belief in the supernatural discount such moments, for they have no real need of them, even when they doubt. Nor do they find it necessary usually in their search for a *raison d'être* to investigate, among other things, the doctrines of Ouspensky, who taught that since man is a machine he can understand and control himself as he does his automobile. Loran's disillusion in his system lies in that it ignores what really matters, offers sawdust to quench her soul's thirst. "How strange," she comments, "if Christ had said, 'I am one of the ways, part of the truth, and some of the life.' "

She is rescued from her emptiness less by her intellectual gropings than by the most moving single incident in the book and the most convincing of her experiences with the Absolute. In utter hopelessness she plans suicide in a river under whose rocks people have been irretrievably lost, her despair so profound she seeks not just death but to be expunged without trace from the annals of the living. On the bank of the river she is held back: "I knew . . . I should be making an unbreakable link between myself and all the evil in the world. It came over me blindingly, for the first time in my life, that suicide was a wrong act, was indeed "mortal sin." In that moment, God stopped me. I did not want my life, but I knew I was suddenly forbidden by something outside myself to let go. . . ."

She begins to want her life as her conviction in a very personal Providence grows—her certainty that the book she needs to read will turn up, that the wandering life her job as an interviewer demands is good, for now and then she has "to be in a particular place at a particular time" for a very specific reason. She begins to pray with intensity, with ecstasy. She comes

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to believe in Christ, in spite of Christians. She seeks a way of prayer and contemplation, a way she cannot find in any religion though she does discover that the spiritual life flourishes where at least a few are gathered together.

"The Tilted Spiral" is unfinished—it is still being lived. That is one reason it is less satisfactory as literature than the first part of the book, that and the fact that the spiral has not only its ups and downs but also its asides—the book could have been cut with profit.

The intellectual odyssey is unfinished, too. Miss Hurnscot is not yet at rest with her God. The problem, as I have suggested, is one of whether or not there is a church to which she should belong. It is quite possible that she is, as she terms it, "a goat" or "a God-loving cat that walks by itself." However, she protests too much—her complaints against the Church are tinged, it seems, with the rancor she sees as her principal vice. One finds her abhorrence for the violence of Christianity not hard to understand, but it isn't the whole of the story.

Nonetheless, despite the book's diffuseness and lack of resolution, the story it recounts has for this century an immediacy that convinces. Some thirty years ago a girl in the spirit of her age chose to live by passion and agnosticism, as a psuedo-scientist demanding weight or measure in proof of any reality. She bears witness now to God, to Christ, to the Providence which numbers the hairs of human heads, and to the efficacy of prayer. For all that there is nothing to be but grateful.

Tale of a Drifter

MAKING PROGRESS. By Anthony Bailey. Dial. $3.50.

By RICHARD GILMAN

THE ANTI-HERO has by now almost as many distinguishing characteristics as his extreme literary opposite. No muscles, a jaw that hints at failure during crises, a vocabulary without expletives, hortatory phrases or verbs expressing intention. In Anthony Bailey's first novel, or anti-novel, he bears certain additional English watermarks: a soiled Burberry, hair in need of a trim, a reek of middle-class imaginings. He sees the world as his oyster—only it is perpetually a month without "r"—is ambitionless as a crossword-puzzle maker and is only roused now and then by sex, about which, however, he has been badly informed.

Bailey's Slater, he who "makes progress," has won a good deal of money in the Sweepstakes, which enables him to sojourn in Switzerland and lay himself open to whatever winds are blowing there. The big wind happens to come from the Middle East, in the person of one Morkaba, who heads some never-defined secret organization and through a mistake enlists Slater in its shadowy and obviously dangerous machinations.

But first Slater feeds for a while, like a knight-errant in training, in the harebrained atmosphere of the Swiss resort, whose chief claim to attention is the three-day visit paid to it in the twenties by a noted Rumanian composer. A Kiwanis-like group of Americans invades the town, thereby causing the long unused casino to be got frantically in readiness; Père Gerard, the famous singing priest, comes to deliver a lecture on "How the Vatican can make use of Jazz"; two American girls named Marijane Gutz and Priscilla Mayhem try to drag Slater off to Vienna in their rented car.

At last Slater undertakes a mission to Poland for Morkaba, but is of course sidetracked at once and winds up in Germany. He is accompanied by Morkaba's deserting mistress, who is a sort of aimless-young-man's Rima, blonde, langorous, enchantingly empty-headed. The two undergo various misadventures, pursued by both Morkaba and a man in a trilby hat who is, we are made to know, an agent of British counter-intelligence. *Enfin*, there is a dénouement in Amsterdam, after which Slater winds up

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"You drift," Slater's Polish countess ex-girl friend once told him. "You don't take things with seriousness or responsibility. You never *do* things. Things just happen to you." This is accurate but far too explicit for the strict rules of the anti-romance, and as Slater's ping-pong ball existence unfolds we become aware that Bailey is possibly satirizing the genre, really writing an anti-anti-novel, with an heroically unheroic hero. But we cannot be sure.

This is so because *Making Progress* simply isn't very funny, nor does it display any profound sense of irony or maintain any distance from itself. On the other hand, it is surely not meant to be taken seriously, not even in the wry manner of Kingsley Amis or Wain and Braine. What one is sadly led to conclude is that Bailey, a talented young man who does not trust his deeper powers, or who perhaps made a vow at eleven to have a book published by twenty-five, has contrived to enter the literary world by one of its temporarily fashionable gates. In doing that he has simply added another to that growing stack of books by capable young writers who have failed to heed, or never encountered, Rilke's advice to the young. Don't be in a hurry to publish, the poet told them. Put your manuscript in a drawer and take it out ten years later; if you still want to see it in print, then have it published. *Making Progress* won't look any better ten years from now than it does today, but Bailey, we may hope, will improve with maturity.

REVIEWERS

Thomas F. Curley, a regular contributor, is a New York novelist and critic.

Marian Seldin is a member of the faculty at Hofstra College, Long Island.

Richard Gilman writes on literary and cultural matters for various publications.

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